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ABSTRACT

Postpedagogy--teaching within postmodern culture--begins in the belief that modern culture and all of its institutions, including education, has entered a vaguely defined post-condition called postmodernism. This post-condition is not simply an interesting artistic category or mere academic theory, but is a fundamental shift in modes of expression, sources of articulation, and horizons of expectations. To address these shifts, a corresponding condition must also be addressed--a new rhetoric is needed to describe this new understanding. This "terra incognita" will be between language and silence. This middle way will both honor the past and the present, and will take seriously as a way of knowing and being that "all is always now." If education is going to adapt itself to this postmodern condition, it must adopt a new rhetoric, or postpedagogy. For example, in a college honors program, daily practices are not separated from an understanding of the culture. Postpedagogy is the enactment of the understanding of the current cultural paradigmatic shift into the classroom. "Rules" of postpedagogy might include: (1) no content is unchanging; (2) the message is the medium; (3) all knowledge is provisional knowledge; (4) knowledge is posited as knowing; (5) knowing and being are interactive and invisible; and (6) authority is based on authorship. A pluralistic, collaborative body in the university will encourage ideas that enhance and review the curriculum while supporting proposals which seek a correspondence between the old and new paradigms. (MM)

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BEWTEEN LANGUAGE AND SILENCE:

POSTPEDAGOGY'S MIDDLE WAY

PART I THE TEXT

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April 26, 1988

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Agatha: In a world of fugitives
The person taking the opposite direction
Will appear to run way.

Harry: Everything is true in a different sense,
A sense that would have seemed meaningless
before./
Everything tends toward reconciliation...

These two quotations from T.S. Eliot's The Family Reunion represent not only the dissonances within one English family, but also represent the dissonances in the modern-postmodern debate. By using Eliot in the same breath as postmodernism, it is my hope to do several things: to hint at modernity's parental responsibilities for its problem child, postmodernity; to, thus, make superficial the distinctions between the "traditional" which is, in fact, deeply modernist thinking, and the "non-traditional" which is the postmodern; to allow, therefore, an opening for a middle way between modernity and postmdernity; by using a poet instead of a philosopher or social scientist to reaffirm and reassert literature and art's role in shaping and articulating the cultural climate; to reemphasize that since higher education takes place within that very same culture, cultural debates are, in fact, educational debates; and to suggest that if we are to talk about education we must do so with the subtlety of image, the complication of context, the play of text, and the explosion of metaphor as experienced in art and literature.

Postpedagogy--which is teaching within postmodern culture--begins in the belief that modern culture and all of its institutions, including education, has entered a vaguely, and not always happily, defined post-condition called postmodernism. This post-condition is not simply an interesting artistic category or mere academic theory, but is a fundamental shift in modes of expression, sources of articulation, and horizons of expectations. Borrowing Thomas S. Kuhn's description of paradigm ("the entire constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques shared by a given community"), Hans Kung declares that "this kind of macroparadigm change, then, doesn't mean a mere swing of the pendulum or new wave, no mere alteration of the mood of the public in the 1960's or '70's, no given political shift in the 1980's. But what I mean here is a fundamental and long term transformation of the view of the things as a whole."[Text of a talk given at the Jewish Theological Seminary.] There are many names that could be given to our age--postindustrial, postcapitalist, post-structuralist, posttechnocratic, postsexist, postcolonialist, etc.--yet they would all boil down to this understanding: there is a crisis in and transformation of the modern paradigm. And postpedagogy takes seriously this situation and addresses these shifts in understanding.

But to address these shifts, we must address a corresponding condition: the art of understanding is inseparable from the act of presentation: we will need a new rhetoric to describe our new understanding. In this <u>terra incognita</u>, we shall be between language and silence. That is, we shall be between the logocentric discourse that has dominated language in the West (and only the West) and the silence of mathematics and art. And this middle way, this "difficult

whole," will be one of the oxymoron, where will we note the "language of silence," books which talk about the end of the book, where we will attempt to be still and still moving. This middle way will both honor the past and the present, and will take seriously as a way of knowing and being that "all is always now." And while there may be an overwhelming "presence of absence," and that our beloved genres have become blurred, we note that the fields keep their character. The words mix into new compounds, the language wraps around the unfamiliar, but the grammar of experience remains the same: all of us share in the absence of a common logos.

This means we will have to review our approach to history. Although much is being written about the current conceptions of history and the patterns of social change, it is that most religious and rigorous of traditionalists, T.S.Eliot, who found the past and history not what they had appeared to be. In "East Coker," Eliot talks to a condition, that if modernists refuse to call postmodern, must surely be acknowledged as existential:

> There is, it seems to us,
> At best a limited value
> In the knowledge derived from experience.
> The knowledge imposes a pattern, and falsifies,
> For the pattern is new in every moment
> And every moment is a new and shocking
> Valuation of all we have been.

Later he notes that history may be servitude or it may be freedom, but if it is not to be the individual rosary bead of fixed moments it must change and renew itself in its retelling. Thus what traditionalists so glibly view as the tradition is, in fact, something always in Heraclitian flux. Its retelling, whether in a textbook or a lecture, is a revision: its objective truths are subjected to the indeterminacy of individual and social constructions and reconstructions.

As we have been developing it over the last few years in our Honors Program, the following reconstruction can be seen as a way of understanding the postmodern. My reconstruction is as follows. I take it as a given that we are entering the third phase of the premodern, modern, postmodern paradigm shift. I think these phases correspond to three ways in which humanity has attempted to integrate knowing with being; that is, the prepersonal, the personal, and the transpersonal.

The premodern is the prepersonal in that identity is typified by the Greek concept of polis, the small city state which generated its logos within a locus of the community; one's identity is intrinsically bound up with the community's identity. That is, the birth of logocentrism begins with the idea that the WORD is at the center of one's knowing and this, in turn, is the model for one's being. Therefore, knowing is not individualistic nor is it personalized, but, in fact, one's identity is established solely within the community's microcosmic understanding of the macrocosmic Truth.

Although some view the rise of monotheism as a shift away from this structure, in fact Judeo-Christian thinking posits one omniscient being at the center of the macrocosm whose Truths are

interpreted by elite rabbis and priests. These truths are contained within the Word and interpretations are to establish true belief. To individuate or to personalize the Word is to alienate one's being from the community of true believers. In this way, the premodern is the prepersonal.

The modern paradigm, however, personalizes identity; that is identity and, therefore, meaning are derived from the individual in radical contradistinction to society. As the unified logos of the Medieval-Renaissance collapsed under the collective weight of the Reformation, capitalism, nationalism, and technology, the alienated self could find meaning only within the self. Thus, the self condemned to freedom from a common logos had to discover itself in opposition to the often banal "real world." This can be most spectacularly (though not exclusively) seen in the Romantic hero's journey to the interior. The modern, therefore, above all praises and nutures a bifurcation of knowing from being. Trapped in the "prison house of the body" is my "born free" spirit: I may be playing social roles, but inside there is the REAL me, the me nobody understands, the me of the "rich, interior life." Thus we see the rise of radical individualism and the imperialization of the self in opposition to society. Here identity is a very personal thing.

Yet as Daniel Bell notes modern society is not a monolithic thing. For Bell there is a "disjunction of realms."

> Within this framework, one can discern the structural sources of tension in the society: between a social structure (primarily techno-economic) which is bureaucratic and hierarchical, and a polity which

> believes, formally, in equality and participation; between a social structure that is organized fundamentally in terms of role and specialization, and a culture which is concerned with enhancement and fulfillment of the self and "whole" person. In these contradictions, one perceives many of the latent social conflicts that have expressed ideologically as alienation, depersonalization, the attack on authority, and the like. In these adversary relations, one sees the disjunction of realms.(The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, p.14)

It is my position that this disjunction of realms comes from the modernist agenda. The very formulations of modernity called for its own post-condition which would not so much succeed it, but attempt a "difficult whole", a middle way: postmodernism is both modernism and what comes after. We are in between the one and the many.

There are many issues here at this cusp. Yet for those in education none seems more pressing than that of the role, status, and the very definition of tradition. With this issue we return to the conflict that opened this paper. On the surface, it is a modern-postmodern debate. On one side seem to be those who share Agatha's view. Many educators today feel that our value-free, relativistic, experience-oriented culture is one of "fugitives." "Fugitive" educators, these modernists say, have produced a generation of students nearly illiterate in the foundations of Western thought. For the modernists the answer lies in "reclaiming the tradition," or in

teaching "cultural literacy," or in reinstituting the ancient Greek foundations of Western thought. For Allan Bloom our colleges have produced students who "are lost in a no-man's land between the goodness of knowing and the goodness of culture, where they have been placed by their teachers who no longer have the resources to guide them."(The Closing of the American Mind, p.37) Bloom's position rests on a fundamentally modernist revision of the premodern concept of tradition and truth: tradition is what the elite has determined it to be. And the duty of the elite intellectual, not unlike the premodern priest, is to pass down the truth to the unenlightened.

The neoconservative modernist believes that in education relativity has replaced Truth, indeterminacy has replaced certitude, being has replaced knowing. Indeed, we come to Harry's position that "everything is true in a different sense." For the relativists, truth is changed in the retelling. Hence, the quintessential postmodern view is to affirm a sense of becoming, not a standing fast. Something is always becoming something else. Every decoding is another encoding. This is the world of the likes of Barthes, Derrida, and Ulmer. In "From Work to Text", Roland Barthes is typically provocative when he writes:

> ...the discourse on the Text [as opposed to static Work] should itself be nothing other than text, research, textual activity, since the Text is that social space which leaves no language safe, outside, nor any subject of the enunciation in position as judge, master, analyst, confessor, decoder...the Text is that space where no language has a hold over any other. (Debating Texts, p.122)

I think we can safely say that this certainly sounds like Agatha's conception of a world of fugitives. Indeed, Bloom's quotation above could be seen as a direct response to Barthes'position on the impossibility of textual authority. And all of the deconstructionists' positions can be seen as an attack on tradition and its sources of authority, leaving both faculty and students in a "no-man's" land of ambivalence, between language and silence.

Yet I think this postmodern "fugitive relativist" vs. modern "traditional authority" split is essentially misleading. Misleading because these positions rest on the concept that postmodernism is anti-modernism, while, in fact, modernity called forth postmodernity. While Bloom is right in pointing out that the current educational condition has placed students between the goodness of culture and the goodness of knowing (as he bifurcates them), he doesn't seem to know that: 1)"tradition" as modernity conceived it was inherently problematical; and 2) this condition is not bad, but it <u>is</u> the middle way.

This middle way between language and silence comes from the art, music, and literature of the late modern. For those who have been attending these cultural moments, one phrase seems to capture the late modernist aesthetic that inaugurates the postmodern: break-up. In the deeply felt split between self and society that characterizes the late modern, artists constructed a new language that broke up the foundations of the modernist paradigm.

In painting, this break-up occurs in color (Monet, Seurat), in pigment (Van Gogh, Soutine, Rouault, Kokoschka), of form (Cezanne, Braque, Balla, Duchamp, Boccini, which resulted in the movements of

Cubism, futurism, and collage), of content (DeChirico, Klee, Miro, Dali, Ernst), and of space (Delaunay, O'Keefe, Matisse, Calder). [I am indebted to Katherine Kuh's Break-Up for the above description.]

In music, the linear-sonata-allegro pattern is broken up by Schonberg's twelve tone system which posits tones in clusters rather than large developmental blocks. Earlier Debussy's rich, unfolding chordal textures had replaced the sturm und drang of the late Romantic; the sun coming up over la mer is more important than the inner turmoil of the tortured individual.

In literature the break up is also evident. Although always considered the quintessential modernist, T.S. Eliot foresaw the implications for literature in late modernism, especially in what Eliot calls "the intersection of time with the timeless." That is, the problematic nature of the past within the present, the transcendental within the immanent. With perfect inflection, Eliot began The Four Quartets with the following quotations from Heraclitus:

> "Though the Word(Logos) is common to all
> Most men live as though each of them
> had his own particular wisdom."
>
> "The way up and the way down are one and the same."

This reference to the philosopher of flux is no accident. Eliot wishes to make the "unfixity" of experience a critical issue. Here from the master modernist poet is concern for the plurality of

wisdom, the problem of the direction of the elite, the perceived, if not real, absence of the center, and, perhaps most critically, the deconstruction of the Word. In one way, the whole of Four Quartets can be apprehended as a play of what will become the themes of postmodernity. Early on he catches some of these themes musically:

> And do not call it fixity,
> Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor/ towards
> Neither ascent or decline. Except for the point, the still point,/
> There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
> I can only say, there we have been: but I cannot say where./

At first such lines seem, if not senseless, certainly obscure. On further inspection we begin to understand that Eliot is using the "shabbiest" of equipment--words--to express in both manner and meaning the problem of being in the present. That is, where are we when we talk about the present? And, indeed, when is the present? Or past, or future, for that matter? Further, we need to be, as he says later, still and still moving. But how is that possible? The very language seems to sign and cancel itself simultaneously. Further still, not only is the present a problem, but the past is swamped in indeterminacy: "I can only say there we have been: but I cannot say where." Like it or not, indeterminacy is our inheritance.

Thus, in art, music and literature the break-up is complete. This break-up is also a break; from the past, from the horizons of modernist society's expectations, from the very ground of being.

These issues of the indeterminacy of history, of an unstable tradition, of the disjunction of realms, and of a deconstructed center of shared meaning are at the heart of the current debate in higher education. It is my position that postmodernism is a direct response to the modernist aesthetic and the character of postmodern culture and its concomitant postpedagogy address the deepest problems of modern society without necessarily solving them. This is now the third paradigm, the transpersonal-postmodern.

Here is the paradigm of the transpersonal. Truth is established between, among, and with others. Under the postmodern I place all those activities which accentuate the social construction of truth against a transcendental truth available only to those who have been initiated into the elite. Among those activities I include poststructurialism, deconstruction, post(e)pedagogy, and many diverse postmodern perspectives. I understand that these disciplines have different methods, agendas, and adherents, but many would agree with Rom Harre that mind is a social construction.

The postmodern-transpersonal takes its model of knowing not from the angst and drama-drenched sonata-romantic linear paradigm, but from the pastiche-collage-fugal model of knowing. We are, this structure says, multiple selves, creating ourselves with others in constantly changing contexts. We are constantly interacting and acting upon the environment, its languages, its beings; we are not alienated from, but are penetrated by the world. Monet with his play of light on water, Debussey with his unfolding, exotic harmonies, drained of drama, but filled with unceasing flow, and Virginia Woolf with her articulation of the "luminous halo" are the artistic

beginnings of the world of the constructing other. We live in, and perhaps only in, the language we make between us. It is for this reason that Derrida broadens his view of language into the whole field of "writing" which, for him, is the creating of reality.

The world that the postpedagogist finds him/herself in is one of conflicting paradigms represented by different language games. As I have stated before, the current crisis in education is precisely the dissonance between a modernist-based academy and a postmodernist culture. Either/or hysteria surrounding this issue is of course modernist driven. Yeats' line "The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity" represents the quintessential modern stand.

Finally, it isn't a question of choosing between modernism and postmodernism. Rather it is an appreciation that reality is a social construction, that all of our cherished facts of life are of our own making, and that we make up the rules of the game we live by. Whether or not we believe in transcended truth, we cannot escape the condition of our translations: we are in the terribly wonderful world of a multivalent construction of reality: the truth of what we say is in our utterances and the variety of their expressions. The traditions we hold so dear are human constructions, often filled with biases, elitism, sexism and ethnocentrism. The traditions we think we ought to reclaim are the very traditions which vouchsafed no tradition as holy. Modernist tradition always called for its own critical reshaping. We are beings-in-time, the Heraclitian flux is our inheritance and our world.

Courage in the late twentieth century is not fighting the barbarians, or embracing any number of old-time religions, nor is

it a laid-back acceptance of our often valueless consumer driven society. To me courage is the articulation of a middle way which does not choose among, but walks between language games, between modernity and postmodernity, between language and silence. Courage is the responsible realization that one's authority is based on one's authorship: one's local creation of one's understanding of the language games within the local paradigms. Agatha is misguided for she cannot identify the right direction: the fugitives are those who disagree with the established position. And Harry seems misguided in that he believes in reconciliation. Eventually this might happen. But for now courage also may be in accepting the disjunction of realms and the competing language games without attempting to dismiss or to diminish their differences. We will be living in this strange landscape for a while.

It is postmodern art, music, and literature which gives us the difficult whole of this strange landscape. For some, postmodernism is the sign of the decline of the West. With its open embrace of the pluralistic through multivalent and juxtapositional means, often with an ironic or bemused tone, postmodern art can seem silly and sarcastic to the high-minded modernist. Yet, for me, postmodernism can be seen as a courageous acceptance of the shift to a new paradigm; a paradigm not built upon the ruins of another, but one which is reconstructing the very ground of the field of experiencing; throwing nothing out, disregarding no voice, no matter how dissonant or old, living in the leveled landscape of the many, the truth made between us and not dropped from above.

If anything postmodernism is deeply concerned with reconstructing the deconstructed past. As I have already noted, it is modernity which detached itself from the past. Postmodernism seeks a reconstruction of the past but with full knowledge of the indeterminacy of human experience. In his most recent book, Post-Modernism: The New Classicism in Art and Architecture (New York: Rizzoli International Pub. Inc., 1987) Charles Jencks generates a whole list of "emergent rules" which provides a real path through this terra incognita. Using art, architecture, literature (though not music) and philosophy, Jencks posits postmodernism as a fundamental way of understanding our culture and, by implication, our education. For my purposes, I will be broadening these rules to prepare for the specific implications for post(e)pedagogy I will detail later. Again I need to assert that in the blurred genre world of postmodernism art, music, ideas, and education are stirred into the same pot; each is a way of understanding the other. Additionally, we should remember that the rules Jencks discusses are descriptive, not prescriptive.

1.THE DIFFICULT WHOLE. First coined by Robert Venturi, this phrase emphasizes the hybrid, oxymoronic nature of the postmodern experience where such phrases as "disharmonious harmony" and "dissonant beauty" come into play. Here is one of the seams between modernism and postmodernism where tradition and currency must negotiate reality. For the postmodernist, disjunction, juxtaposition, and contradiction are the givens in a pluralistic universe. It is appropriate that the most social of arts, architecture, is the source of the discussion on postmodernism. The spaces we occupy become indications of where we are. We may want to

keep the concept of the difficult whole before us as an image to better understand the postmodern condition. Our culture is no longer, and may never have been, a unified thing. Our portrait at the end of the century is a shattered, fragmented, and fractured one. Or, to ease away from the visual, we are a fugue: many voices weaving in and out of our hearing, layered one upon the other. This is why our buildings, our fictions, our external and internal airwaves are filled with interlacing and interpenetrating quotations. No less we ourselves are many different selves, playing many roles, in many paradigms and contexts. This difficult whole is therefore the condition of our culture, our arts, our lives, and, despite the shrills and outcries from the neoconservatives, our classrooms.

For education this means not only the accessing of many different communities, but also encouraging their centering within the community. In one way community colleges are much closer to the postmodern paradigm: its elitism is based on pluralism, the egalitarian elite.

However, the current disjunction of realms in colleges makes the whole more difficult than it has to be. The current dissonance on campuses is the cacophony produced by many voices from different realms. Simply put, it is very difficult to have a pluralist population inhabiting an elite space. And the structure of this space is thoroughly modern: hierarchical management, separate faculty departments run by chairs, and ranked professors. And its mission is thoroughly modern: to act as a place of initiation into a fixed tradition and transference of that knowledge into a future career.

What should be clear now is that the tradition to be passed on has been problematized by its own inheritance of indeterminacy and the breaking up of Tradition into traditions of competing language

games. The college campus may be the most spectacular example of the difficult whole.

Therefore, what is needed is a new construction that allows for collaboration on the paradoxes of our plurality, where there is consensus on our missions, where the decisions are made by the people who are affected by them. The current either/or, manager/professor split (the student is always ignored in this split) forces allegiances to groups, not to the whole (difficult as that may be for awhile). Social construction demands collaboration by all parties.

2.PLURALISM. Here is the "radical eclecticism" of the postmodern which seeks not a synthesis of traditions, but a juxtaposition of all traditions. Of course, this is why postmodernism is rejected by traditionalists of all kinds. In art, postmodern has blurred the distinctions of high, mid, and low "brow" art. Apparently gone is the common aesthetic that would have us agree with Keats that "Beauty is truth, and Truth, beauty." Postmodern art really constructs an aesthetic that believes that since the center--the common logos--is absent, then it is the existing "margins" that are as fruitful as a missing center. Thus many postmodern artists like Warhol, Lichtenstein, Glass, and Laurie Anderson not only openly avow the popular, but don't seem to make any distinctions between the popular and the classical. Postmodern art doesn't, therefore, necessarily favor the popular, rather it accepts the popular as a member of the community of possible artistic reconstructions of the world.

For Bloom, learning has become contaminated by popular culture. For Rutgers' George Levine, learning needs to co-opt popular culture. For Bloom, Rock music is what the decline of the West sounds like. For others, our radio dials are preset to a variety of musical styles, its horizontal lining up of stations a visible symbol of the riches of urban media pluralism.

Again, we return to the problem of tradition. For people like Bloom, the university should be a haven from the mediocre and the everyday. It should be the tranquil place where the tradition is contemplated by an elite few. Of course what close readers of Bloom have noted is that women, blacks, and popularizers have no place in this new Bloomsbury. For Bloom the tradition is white, male, and European. People who want to praise Bloom's position may want to remember that he never mentions one woman, or black, or, and this should be a warning shot across the bow of the American professorate, one American as worthy of serious study.

Once we realize, as someone like Bloom inadvertently points out, that culture, tradition, and standards are of our own devising (because Bloom himself is devising a new one), then we need to open up the tradition further than some arbitrary boundaries determined by an elite few. Perhaps we ought to take democracy as not only a political right, but as a way of knowing.

Clearly the notion of cultural literacy is important. There are major names and works which have shaped our thinking. But tradition is not its own justification. In a deconstructing world we need to evaluate and reevaluate the foundations upon which our knowledge is built. Perhaps, we may want to abandon the house-of-knowledge

metaphor and walk out into the field of knowing, the plural landscape of different perspectives where new directions allow us to make new connections, where knowing is the wide world of interlacing influences and confluences. Thus, a postpedagogical curriculum would use the broadest possible understanding of what language can be, and would seek to open up the curriculum to the world, not just the provincial locality, of influence.

3.MULTIVALENT ART."...a multivalent work reaches out to the rest of the environment, to many adjacent references, and to many different associations."(Jencks, p.342) Again, we see the refusal to pick a tradition and a need to embrace traditions. Here the "pluridimensional character of symbolic thought" is enacted. Woolf's "luminous halo" is the perceived character of our knowing. Thus, again, postmodern art is a pluralistic mix of styles and languages, its very model the synergy of knowing and being itself: the whole is always more than the sum of its parts. The logocentrism of linear, logical discourse is only one model of knowing. Indeed, although it is the central model of education, its validity there and elsewhere is in question. Deconstruction not only posits a deconstruction of the word, it also reconstructs new possibilities of "the word" in the broader contexts of writing. By implication, when writing is expanded in its concepts of enactment, then the methods of enactment are also expanded.

This multivalent approach means that form and content become more closely aligned. The act of representation is inseparable from the act of presentation. In a multivalent, multi-voiced, multi-perspective world--the very pluralism of our knowing--is in the acts

of our being. In postmodern art, music, literature, dance, and architecture, this blurring has been a modus operandi for a long time. Beginning with the collagist in painting, 20th century art has made great use of bricolage. Lyotard defines bricolage as "the high frequency of quotations of elements of previous styles or periods (classical or modern) giving up the consideration of environment." We can hear this in such musical works as Luciano Berio's Sinfonia which contains the rich interweaving of various musical styles from Beethoven to Mahler along with quotations from Joyce, Beckett, and Martin Luther King Jr.

With this pastiche-collage approach, art gets closer to the ordinary mind on an ordinary day as it is bombarded on all sides by memory, sensation, and expectation. There is nothing wrong with logocentric discourse as long as we understand that it is only one way of articulating understanding; an ancient and prized way, but one with severe limitations. Of course, in order to respond to such quotations and such multivalency, we need new ways to both create and respond to such ways of knowing.

Art always reflects and shapes its environment. Our two most spectacular cultural revolutions have changed forever the way language, art, and literature are understood. The first revolution was avant-garde art "which broke with the Renaissance tradition of representational realism." The second was the development of film, television, video, and computers "which brought about a shift in the dominate mode of communication in our culture." (Ulmer in Atkins and Johnson, p.38) The first revolution has produced a whole new rhetoric of which bricolage and pastiche are only two of the most prominent.

The second revolution, however, is less well understood in terms of both the culture and the classroom. When Barthes says "Let the commentary itself be a text", he means that the modes of communication must honor the multiplicity of experience itself. Thus, Baudillard's "ecstasy of communication" is a call for "criticism" to be more than reading and writing as traditionally understood. This means we must begin to examine the uses of media not only in the transference of information, but in the creation of texts themselves. In brief: we need multiple modes of communication for multiple ways of knowing. In postpedagogy, this means as Ulmer notes: "Pedagogy must itself be a text."

4.ANAMNESIS. Unlike the modern, the postmodern seeks a relationship with the past. As noted before, such a relationship is now highly problematical, but is now also a goal within itself. Such a goal has produced as Jencks notes "parody, nostalgia, and pastiche" and the "narrative without a plot," but the attempt is to reconstruct the past. Once again, we see the heavy reliance on quotations from older sources. Popular music has been very willing to use such quotations. In the mid-60's, rock openly embraced the Baroque revival; quotations from the Baroque can be heard in the harpsichord solo in the Beatles' "In My Life" and a direct quotation of Bach's Prelude No.1 can be heard in the middle of Procol Harum's "Repent Walpurgis" (the title itself yet another quotation).

Whether one wants to see such quoting as cheap access to "high" culture, or as genuine homage, such juxtapositional understanding has allowed pop art an easier time in embracing the past. This is because

the progressive, anti-bourgeois thrust of modern art eschewed the past as an essentially dead thing which in turn the bourgeois co-opted as Tradition. This still continues and is in fact the major source of dissonance in higher education. Yet the postmodernist understands that we bring the past forward with us: our knowing is not the ex nihlo creation of the moment, but rests on the vibrations, echoes, and hints from the past.

But this return to the past is not one of objective discovery of the hidden Truth contained within the past, but is the conscious making of a translation of the past within the difficult whole of the multivalent present: history is not an archeological dig, the past a broken shard of pottery, but is a text read into being by our translations of it; history is a dialogue with the past, new in every valuation. While many modernists found the eternal condition of continual translation a terrifying and depressing one, the postmodernist takes such translations as a central activity of personal freedom. Existential Freedoom becomes postmodern freedom. Praxis in our world is one's authorizing of one's understanding of the past, and not the objective transference of a past, if such a thing were possible.

There is a classic anecdote which reveals the subtlety and impact of this situation. While on tour, the great Spanish cellist Pablo Casals met his good friend the harpsichordist, Wanda Landowska. Both were concertizing at the time and decided to rehearse some Bach together. The rehearsals went badly; they disagreed on everything, tempo, tone, phrasing, everything. After a few hours of this, Landowska slammed down the harpsichord's lid and said with all of her five foot majesty: "Pablo, this will not do. Listen, you play Bach your way, and I'll play Bach his way!"

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Again, tradition is for some a true and unchanging thing. For others it is a dialogue. Thus our return to the past is done in full knowledge of the recreative act of historisizing. Thus, tradition can not be its own justification, but something which we must reclaim everyday, fully aware of our revisions.

By all means we must study the great masters of the past. Such works infect, affect, effect, and reflect our understanding. Yet, I hope now that it is clear that we can no longer live with the elitist position that we pass on culture as hermetically sealed truths, or that the classroom is a museum of glassed-in artifacts. We return to the past not with a shovel but with a pen.

5."THE RETURN TO THE ABSENT CENTER." The postmodern experience is haunted by the "presence of absence." Thus, we attempt a synthesis "without a shared metaphysics or a belief in a single cosmic system."(Jencks, p.34) This may be as simple as Robert Frost's "We dance around in a ring and suppose,/ But the secret sits in the middle and knows." Again we need to remember that in the postmodern world our identity is formulated within a network of social relations and social constructions; that is, meaning is developed <u>between</u> people and therefore, truth is a social construction. What distinguishes the pre- from the trans-personal, are: 1) the absence of a transcendental concept of truth--there is no common logos; 2) truth, therefore, is a social construction among like-minded individuals; 3) this truth is a local construction, bounded by the language of the local paradigm; 4) language is the central currency between people; and 5) "language" needs to be broadened to the full range of human enactments of our constructed truths: words, music, movement, video, <u>et al</u> must be seen as language.

For a long time this presence of absence has reminded me of ghost cargo cults. In World War II, on the Phillipine Islands Americans landed with their troops, tanks, weapons, and all of the gear needed to fight and win a war. Of course the natives were impressed. And they were especially impressed with the radio set-up which allowed men to speak into a microphone and then, magically, all manner of goods would drop from the sky. When the war was over and the troops left, the natives would gather around and in the abandoned radio shed, they would speak, chant, and pray into what was now a long dead microphone. But unlike their predecessors, nothing fell from the sky for them. The cult arose because these natives believed that they were doing something wrong and had offended the gods. Indeed, teaching in the late '80's can feel like this abandonment, especially for those of us trained in the modernist academy: we speak the words that seem to work for our elders, yet nothing seems to happen for us; the spell has been broken, we have done something wrong.

It will take some courage in the late 20th century to understand that we, and only we, will need to either remake the absent center, or we will have to live and work and teach on the margins. To remake the center, we will need a new rhetoric.

POST(E)PEDAGOGY

If education is going to adapt itself to this postmodern condition, it must adopt a new rhetoric. This new rhetoric can be found in what Gregory Ulmer calls post(e)pedagogy. Ulmer himself describes his unique spelling this way: "The French "e" is included to indicate that this approach is not only "beyond" the old pedagogy

but that it is a pedagogy designed for the age of video and computers (poste as "set")." ["Textshop for Post(e)pedagogy",p.62 in Writing and Differently, C. Douglas Atkins and Michael L.Johnson eds. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985.)] Along with Ulmer and others, I think the art and literature of postmodernism supply the way to an educational culture which unites the new structures of understanding with the older grammars of experience. Post(e)pedagogy takes seriously the effects that avant-garde art, t.v., and computers have had on the culture at large and the academy specifically. The above emergent rules from Jencks are not simply "interesting" trends in art. They color the very classrooms in which we teach. They are part of advertising, fashion, music, book design, publication, shopping mall designs, and are the very stuff of t.v.shows: in short, postmodernism is the air we breathe. Our artists have brought us to the shape of this moment in history. And while the center of this shape may be absent, we can and should articulate the margins.

Although I have talked generally about this issue before on several occasions, this time I will specifically detail what post(e)pedagogy might look like. Again, we will be working in a strange and partially unfamiliar landscape. Part of its strangeness will come from the concept that we are making not discovering our way in the landscape. In short, we are not finding the path hidden beneath consciousness, but are making this middle way ourselves. This new rhetoric will make the language unfamiliar.

The central understanding of the Honors Program is that its daily practices (its being) is not separated from its understanding of the culture (its knowing). This bifurcation of knowing from being

is a central problem of modernity, one which postmodernity continues to address. Post(e)pedagogy is the enactment of the the understanding of our current cultural paradigmatic shift into the classroom. What follows are my own constructions of the "rules" of post(e)pedagogy. They are rules in the same way Jencks are: they embrace the Wittgensteinian notion that reality is made up of the rules we construct and agree to live by. They can change by collaboration among like-minded individuals. They are like the rules of any human game. God doesn't care if a touchdown is scored during halftime, we just don't count it. The touchdown isn't immoral, just irrelevant. I list these rules fully aware that indeterminacy eats away at their authority even as I type.

1. NO CONTENT IS UNCHANGING. Assurity is always being assailed by indeterminacy. If the core of a curriculum is treated as fixed, it does not need a live being to teach it. If, as Nietszche stated, there are no facts, only interpretations, then the interpretation and its assumptions need to be taught. An interactive computer can teach facts, only a person can teach an interpretation.

2. THE MESSAGE IS THE MEDIUM. How we do something is the something. As Barthes says: "Let the commentary be itself a text." Or to use Ulmer's paraphrase: "Pedagogy must itself be a text." This is more than simply that one should not teach differently than one knows, but that what one teaches should inform the presentation. It is for that reason that Part II of this is a video-tape. Simply put, the only response to art is art. Or to generalize the educational situation: one cannot lecture on independent thinking; one cannot teach freedom; one cannot bore another about excitement;

one cannot say the student is the most important person (the phrases "client," "customer," "consumer" are part of the capitalist's strategy for objectifying the personal and they belie the bankrupt business metaphor of education) yet allow that student to be consistently disenfranchised from the community making decisions regarding curriculum, teacher evaluation (note the current irony in faculty objecting to administration input on promotion, when faculty have consistently fought any serious student input on faculty evaluations), allocation of resources, etc. This stems directly from the bifurcation of knowing from being, where one plays a different role from what one believes.

3. ALL KNOWLEDGE IS PROVISIONAL KNOWING. This is Barthes' distinction between Work and Text. A Work is a static entity, a classic repository of authoritative absolute and elite knowledge. Its content is to be passed on to those worthy of such knowledge. Those who will not be initiated into such knowledge are the non-elite. Overtly or covertly, this has been and still is the stand of the modernist academy. The problem, as we should now understand, is that that position rests on either the premodern concept of transcendental truth or the modernist, deeply personalized concept of knowledge.

4. KNOWLEDGE IS POSITED AS KNOWING. In this configuration, the gerund replaces the noun. That is, knowing is done by beings-in-time, over time, who are enacting their uniquely similar constructions of truth. The oxymoron "uniquely similar" is critical: it both honors the underlying grammar of experience which unites human minds, yet, it also honors the unique de- and reconstructions of those structures each individual brings to the human forum we call culture.

5. KNOWING AND BEING ARE INTERACTIVE AND INDIVISIBLE. One does not act differently than what one knows. The modernist construction of playing a role alienated from one's "true self" is dismissed as being impossible. The self is not buried within the functionary, but is in the action one takes. One chooses to be a functionary and chooses to imagine that he or she is a functionary with a buried self. That is, I assert, a construction of reality, not an aberration. In fact, there are no aberrations in this schema; there is no transcendental real action or self or intention outside one's actions; one is as one does. The resort to arguments ad verecundiam is to attempt to establish a truth outside of the one enacting it.

6. AUTHORITY IS BASED ON AUTHORSHIP. Language is a construct for integrating knowing with being for language articulates the unique grammars of experience articulated in texts. The acts of reading and writing with their attempts at provisional understanding create, as Barthes notes, a social space where other responses are possible. Thus, for our program it is authorship which now takes on a central position: only in the generation of texts does it become clear the assumptions, expectations, and understandings of the particular constructions of reality one has taken. Once public and articulated, one's knowing and being becomes social and not mysterious.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

I believe there are certain specific implications for these rules. Such implications have certain other problems attached. First, there will be those who disagree with my reconstruction of the

current cultural and educational scene. This is to be expected in the postmodern condition of the conflict of interpretations; indeed, nothing I have said would not allow for vigorous debate. But what cannot be respected is the unexamined position that tradition is its own justification, or the blithe dismissal of all of the above as "opinion." One, of course, has the right to take any position one chooses. But always one must understand that without authorship, one's "authority" is empty and ignorant; an intellectual ghost cargo cult whose empty rituals have called forth student disenfranchisement from the educational process, and the public's outcry that education no longer serves the deepest needs of the community. I only ask my critics not to wave Bloom or Bennett before me, but to develop their own specific proposals. We are either in collaborative dialogue, or conflicting power struggles. I choose the former.

Second, some readers will note that such logical implications fall into the narrow range of logocentric discourse, that this text itself has failed to fly above the very limits it has decried. I offer two responses to this intelligent position: 1) I am not advocating an abandonment of the traditional modes of expression; my position is additive, not exclusive; and 2) this text is only Part I; a video-text accompanies this presentation: my post(e)pedagogy is itself text and video-text.

What follows is my attempt to place my post(e)pedagogic rules into Union County College. There are a great many suggestions I could make, but I will limit my proposals to three specific areas of enactment: structure, methods, and attitude.

1. STRUCTURE: I propose, again, a center for innovation, excellence, and challenge, which I suggest be called The College-Within-The-College. What is needed is a collaborative body which encourages new ideas and allows for the multiplicity of missions, purposes, and proposals. This pluralistic body made up of administrators, students, staff, and faculty will encourage ideas that enhance and review the traditional curriculum while supporting proposals which seek a correspondence between the old and the new paradigms. Given the centrality of its mission, its attitude is descriptive, positive, and critical, not prescriptive, negative, and arbitrary. C-W-C's main functions should be: 1) encouragement; 2) guidance; 3) participation; 4) review; and 5) perhaps as important, a central place of coordination and promulgation of all on-going projects.

It is hoped that such a body will act as an expansion joint for growth and decline, an opportunity for renewal, a place where all texts are taken seriously, considered thoughtfully, and examined critically. C-W-C takes as a given that authorship is authority and encourages such texts as a central activity of all members of the college community.

2. METHODS: I recently proposed to the Technologies and Humanities Committee what I call video-texts. In a world of blurred genres and media-heavy presentation of ideas, we need new ways to place such cultural occurrences into the classroom. In Honors, we believe that video technology is one palpable way of integrating art, music, ideas, and literature. It is our belief that in video, as Octavio Paz noted, we have at our disposal "a medium that is

simultaneously spoken word and written sign, aural and visual image." Thus video-texts become ways of : 1) restoring movement to texts; 2) placing texts in the unfolding rhythm of experience; and 3) presenting ideas as integrated wholes.

Such video-texts are but one manner of opening up our fields of understanding to wider means and methods of presenting our ways of making meaning in the world. And video-texts do highlight the concept of the dialogic nature between disciplines and fields.

But even if we keep to the more traditional logocentric path, it is time for everyone in the academic community to take seriously his/her role as author rather than transmitter of culture. It is the concept of textualizing and contextualizing one's knowing which is at the heart of what we do. In this changing landscape we will need to do better than play the role of professional functionary. And this means a change in attitude.

3. ATTITUDE: Recently while looking for a short-cut to a major highway, I found myself in a new community of town houses cut out of a New Jersey woods and farmland. Of course, I had wandered into a cul-de-sac, my "short-cut" being a tour through the new suburban landscape. The houses were in clusters, each with four attached dwellings, each in turn with an entirely different facade: one looked colonial, the next Tudor, the next Victorian, etc. And each was a different color with a different door, some new and shiny, the next antique and weathered. On this flattened terrain, each cluster faced a different way, had a different view and perspective.

The image for me is clear: the forest and fields of our romantic vision have been turned into the colorful cluster housing of

a plural people on a flattened landscape. Here is the visible difficult whole that is our condition. Each of us has a facade--colorful, antique, modern, unique--and a different perspective: our view of the landscape and of others is different. Yet, we are all linked together by our common wishes and absences.

And, as I have written this, I think there have been far too many posts in this text. Virginia Woolf notes that life is not a series of lamp posts symmetrically arranged, but a luminous halo. Maybe it is time to talk not about our post condition but our "trans" condition: we are not after anything (and take that anyway you will), but are between: between people, between others, between paradoxes and between paradigms. It is perhaps enough to be between language and silence and to